

further work of this kind, should the necessity arise. The works of last year consisted in the extension of the Waikomiti–West Coast Road (Auckland), the Kairourā–Clarence Road, the deviation of the Christchurch–West Coast Road at the Bealey, and the extension of the Catlin's River Road.

*Roads to open Crown Lands before Sale.*—For this purpose Parliament voted last year £47,502, out of which £28,160 was spent, and liabilities incurred amounting to £18,698 in addition. To cover these liabilities, and provide for the extension of works in hand and others necessary to facilitate the settlement of Crown lands, we shall ask for a total authorisation of £42,370, of which £35,000 is proposed to be expended during the current year.

The various works under this heading which have been in hand during the year extend to almost every district in the colony where settlement is going on; full details will be furnished in the annual report of the Survey Department.

*Village Settlements.*—Last year the sum voted under the head of village settlements for actual expenditure was £19,173; the total amount authorised to cover liabilities as well as expenditure being £48,177 the expenditure has, however, only amounted to £7,345. It is estimated that about £8,032 will be sufficient to meet the requirements of the current year, and it is therefore proposed to ask for a vote for that sum. A further amount of £22,881 will probably be sufficient to cover the liabilities under the arrangement made with the village settlers for advances on their bush-felling and houses, notwithstanding that the liabilities are returned as nominally amounting to £44,661, thus making a total required of £30,913, and it is therefore proposed to transfer the remainder of the loan allocation for village settlements to the different classes of road-works.

*Roads to give Access to the Marton–Te Awamutu Railway.*—Under this heading a sum of £1,692 was voted last year for three items, and of this amount £248 was expended during the year, and liabilities incurred amounting to £666.

We propose to ask Parliament to make a material addition to the vote this year. We shall ask for a further allocation of £40,056 for these road-works, some of which have been partially made, either as cart- or bridle-roads, the others being new so far as this vote is concerned. Looking to the long time that must elapse before through communication can be established by railway from Rangatira to Mokau (the present termini of the railway), it is deemed advisable to provide roads, which, though not following the railway-line, will afford a means of direct travel between Wellington and Auckland. This will be accomplished by continuing the Hunterville–Turangarere Road by the east side of Tongariro and Ruapehu, and effecting a junction with the existing road near Tokaanu. By bridging the Tongariro River, all the roads northwards, extending to Lichfield, Oxford, and Tauranga, will be connected with the proposed road from Turangarere, the point where the main road comes in from Napier. From this same point it is proposed to continue the cart-road on to Karioi, and to open up the Waimarino Block.

The Rotoaira–Waimarino Road is in an incomplete state, though a great deal of work has been done on it. With the expenditure proposed a road will be opened to connect with the one already formed between Karioi and Taumarunui. The vote asked for for the Mangaroa to Stratford Road is to make a through road to the Waikato, suitable for riding and for driving stock.

All of the above roads affect the large area of Crown lands purchased out of Part II. of the Public Works Fund, as well as lands which are now in process of being acquired. By opening these lands settlement will be stimulated, and a return obtained for the money expended.

The vote proposed for expenditure within the year is £30,500, with an authorisation to incur liabilities to the further amount of £10,000.

*Roads on Goldfields.*—The expenditure on roads and tracks on goldfields last year, including subsidies to local bodies for the development of the mining industry, amounted to £13,290, and on the 31st March last the liabilities amounted to £16,524. For the present year we ask for a total authorisation of £27,000 to cover the existing liabilities and to complete roads on which large sums have been expended. This amount will absorb the balance of the loan allocation for works of this class.